

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ هُوَ الْأَمْسَاكَةُ

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

*A Journal of Islamic Renaissance
in America*

In This Issue:

President Reagan's Perception of Jihad in Islam

What is Sin?

Predestination in Islam

An Unprecedented Migration

The Fast of Ramadan

Islam and Peace: A Testimony

The Muslim Republics in the Soviet Union

VOLUME XLIX

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THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

A Journal of the Islamic Renaissance in America

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A Passage From the Holy Quran

وَلَا يَنْجِلُ بَدَنَ مَعْلُوَةً إِلَى عَنْقِكَ وَلَا تَسْطِعُهَا
 كُلُّ أَبْسُطٍ فَتَعْدُ مَلُومًا مَحْسُورًا ①
 إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ لِمَنْ
 كَانَ يَعْمَادُهُ خَيْرًا بِصِيرًا ②
 وَلَا تَنْقُلُوا أَوْلَادَ كُلْ حَشِيشَةٍ إِلَّا مَلَاقِيَ نَحْنُ تَرْزِقُونَ
 وَإِنَّا لِرَبِّنَا نَتَّهُمْ كَانَ خَطَأً كَيْدًا ③
 وَلَا تَنْقِبُوا الرَّبَّنِيَّ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَيِّئَةً ④
 وَلَا تَنْقُلُوا النَّفْسَ إِلَيْهِ حُكْمُ اللَّهِ إِلَّا يَأْخُذَهُ وَمَنْ
 قُتِنَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلَنَا لِلَّهِ سُلْطَانًا فِي الْيَمِينِ
 فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُورًا ⑤
 وَلَا تَنْقِبُوا مَالَ السَّيِّئِ إِلَّا يَأْتِيَ هُنَّ أَحْسَنُ حَثَّ
 بَيْلُغَ أَسْدَهُ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِذَا الْمُهَدِّدُ كَانَ سَوْلًا ⑥
 وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا أَكْتَمْتُمْ وَرَبِّمَا بِالْقُسْطَالِ إِنَّمَا تَفْعِلُونَ
 ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ ثَابِتًا ⑦
 وَلَا تَنْقِبُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ يَهُ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ
 وَالْفُؤَادُ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْؤُلًا ⑧
 وَلَا تَنْتَشِرْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرْحَاجًا إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَجِدَنِي الْأَرْضَ
 وَلَكَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجِيلَ طُولًا ⑨
 كُلُّ ذَلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئَةً عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ⑩
 ذَلِكَ مَمْتَأْتِي إِلَيْكَ رَبِّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَلَا يَنْجِلُ
 سَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْهَا أَخْرَى فَلَنْقِعْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلَوْهَادَهُ دُولًا ⑪

Translation

And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded. Lo! Thy Lord enlargeth the provision for whom He will, and straineth (it from whom He will). Lo! He is ever Knower, Seer of His slaves.

Slay not your children, fearing a fall to penury, We shall provide for them and for you. Lo! the slaying of them is great sin.

And come not near unto fornication. Lo! it is an abomination and an evil way.

And slay not the life which God hath forbidden save with right. Whoso is slain wrongfully, We have given power unto his rightful representative, but let him not commit excess in slaying. Lo! he will be helped.

Come not near the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better till he comes to strength.

And keep the covenant. Lo! of the covenant it will be asked.

Fill the measure when ye measure, and weigh with a right balance; this is meet, and best refuge.

Follow not that whereof thou has no knowledge. Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart—of each of these it will be asked.

And walk not in the earth exultant. Lo! thou canst not rend the earth, nor canst thou stretch hills. The evil of all that is hateful in the sight of thy Lord. This is part of the wisdom wherewith thy Lord hath inspired thee (O Muhammad). And set not up with God any other God, lest thou be cast into hell, reproved, abandoned.

(*Bani-Israel*, 30-40)

Sayings of the Holy Prophet

From Hazrat Ali Zarrin:

The Holy Prophet said, "Aba Zarrin there is no wisdom like clear thinking." (Baihaqi)

From Hazrat Ibni Umar:

The Holy Prophet said, "Moderation in the lay out of expenditure is half of its merit." (Baihaqi)

Hazrat Al-Miqdam bin Ma'dikarib reported God's Messenger saying,

"No one has ever eaten better food than what he eats as a result of the labor of his hands. God's prophet David used to eat from what he had worked for with his hands." (Bukhari)

Hazrat An-Nu'man bin Bashir reported God's Messenger as saying:

"What is lawful is clear and what is unlawful is clear, but between them are certain doubtful things which many people do not recognize. He who guards against doubtful things keeps his religion and his honor blameless, but he who falls into doubtful things falls into what is unlawful, just as a shepherd who pastures his animals round a preserve will soon pasture them in it. Every king has a preserve, and God's preserve is the things He has declared unlawful. In the body there is a piece of flesh, and the whole body is sound if it is sound, but the whole body is corrupt if it is corrupt. It is the heart." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Editorial:**President Reagan's Perception
of Jihad in Islam**

Shortly after his election as the United States President, Mr. Reagan was asked in an interview by TIME magazine's Senior Correspondent, Lawrence Barret, to comment on the current Middle East conflict (TIME, November 17, 1980). President Reagan, in his reply, referred to the possibility of a "religious war" in the area. He contended that such a war could be initiated by the Muslims "returning to the idea that the way to heaven is to lose your life fighting the Christians or the Jews."

Such utter ignorance of the teachings of Islam by the leader of a superpower is disheartening. Such distorted perception of the Islamic concept of Jihad by the principal formulator of the American foreign policy involving several hundreds of millions of Muslims of the world may even cause great harm. Obviously it is not just an opinion about the political situation of a volatile and potentially explosive region. Far beyond such implications, it clearly reflects a woeful and dismayed understanding of the Islamic faith. The President implies that the Muslims have in the past harbored the idea that losing their lives fighting the Christians and the Jews is a pious act which opens the gates of heaven for the followers. In addition, he expresses the possibility of the Muslims returning to this idea, and thus taking an initiative in waging a "religious war."

To begin with, Islam accepts and recognizes that the Jews and the Christians share with it the blessings of receiving the divine revelation. Islam does not claim to have a monopoly on truth. Not only does it acknowledge that the previous prophets received guidance from the Lord, but it makes it imperative on the Muslims to believe in all revelation which came before the Holy Quran (See 2:5).

Even though Islam claimed to be the culmination of earlier revelations, it did not advocate that the non-Muslims should, in any way whatsoever, be forced to embrace Islam. The Holy Quran says:

“The truth is from your Lord, so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve.” (18:30)

And:

“Proofs have indeed come to you from your Lord; so whoever sees, it is for his own good; and whoever becomes blind, it is to his own harm. And I am not a guardian over you.” (6:105)

Further:

“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and have disputation with them in the best manner; surely your Lord best knows who go astray from his path, and He knows best those who follow the right way.” (16:26)

Finally:

“There is no compulsion in religion. Surely right has become distinct from wrong; so whosoever refuses to be led by those who transgress, and believes in Allah, has surely grasped a strong handle which knows no breaking.” (2:257)

President Reagan is perhaps not acquainted with the Islamic guidelines on engaging in a war. At no time, the believers are permitted to “initiate” an aggressive or offensive war. The only situation in which the Muslims are enjoined to engage in a war is a defensive one. The Quran makes it manifestly clear that:

“Permission to fight is granted to those against whom war is made, because they have been

wronged, and Allah indeed has the power to help them. They are those who have been driven out of their homes unjustly only because they affirmed: Our Lord is Allah. If Allah did not repel the aggression of some people by means of others, cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated, would surely be destroyed." (22:40-41)

As Professor L. Haines of the Hartford Seminary points out, "This statement by Mr. Reagan is totally wrong from the points of view of Islamic teachings, and of Muslim motivations. The eminent scholar writes:

"The followers of Islam do not entertain nor does their religion teach any such ideas about the way to heaven. While the Quran does teach that those who are slain in the way of God receive a special blessing (3:157, 169 and 4:69), the nature of that blessing is not specified and is, therefore, variously described in the Islamic traditions. Further, this teaching is not related to fighting Christians and Jews just because they are Christians and Jews, or to fighting any other particular people or religious group, for that matter. On the other hand, Muslims say that if Islam is attacked by internal or external forces, then these forces must be opposed, even if they happen to be Christians or Jews. This extrapolation is no different in principle than the one by Christians to justify opposition to the Ottoman Empire and by Jews to justify the defense of Israel . . . in fact, if Muslims today express opposition to Christians and Jews, it is more likely their natural response to the prior militancy and prejudice expressed by many Christians and Jews toward Islam and Muslim peoples." (Newsletter of the Task Force on the Christian-Muslim Relations, December, 1980)

Contrary to President Reagan's contention that the way to heaven to a Muslim is through losing his life fighting the Christians or the Jews, Professor Laura Vuccia Vagliari of the University of Naples observes:

"Muhammad, always following . . . divine principles, was very tolerant, particularly towards the followers of monotheistic religions. He knew how to show patience with the pagans, always waiting in the belief that time would complete his work of conversion." (**An Interpretation of Islam**, p. 25)

Professor Vagliari proves her thesis by drawing attention to the examples of religious tolerance shown by Prophet Muhammad and his Caliphs. For example, she refers to the historical case of the Christians of Najran who sent a delegation to the Prophet. He personally gave guarantees to them and assured them that their religious institutions will be preserved. The Holy Prophet gave orders to the head of an expedition to Yemen that no Jew be molested in his Judaism, so that the Caliphs gave similar instructions to their generals on the conduct of their armies in war. The learned professor concludes with her observation that "Islam was not satisfied with preaching religious tolerance, but that it made tolerance a part of its religious law." (op. cit. pg. 26)

While Islam totally forbids its followers to engage in offensive wars, it must be noted that it does not deprive them of the right of defending themselves against an aggressor. In fact it considers it a duty for the Muslims. This is a right which is fully recognized by all major religions of the world. At the occasion of the Christmas of 1981, Pope John Paul II sent a message of peace to the world which received wide publicity around the globe. Commenting on the defensive wars, the Pope stated:

"Christians, even as they strive to resist and prevent every form of warfare, have no hesitation in recalling that in the name of elementary requirement of justice peoples have a right and even a duty to protect their existence and freedom to proportionate means against an unjust aggressor."

(**San Francisco Chronicle**, December 22, 1981)

Will President Reagan be just as critical of the Christian practice as he seems to be of the followers of Islam?

The Muslims will readily admit that Islamic teachings in regards to tolerance, peace, freedom of belief, brotherly relationships with the "People of the Book," the Christians and the Jews and the true meaning of "Jihad" have not always been observed by those who claimed to be its followers. Both in the past as well as in our times, these injunctions have been misinterpreted and abused for ulterior designs by some who, in the name of Islam, pursued their personal goals of expanding their empires and consolidating their power. However, the overall record of Islamic practice is outstanding. The Muslims can justly be proud of their past and they can receive from it genuine, soul-lifting inspiration for the present and the future. They can learn to avoid a repetition of the mistakes made by few and follow the true teachings of the Quran and excellent example of the Prophet Muhammad.

It may be added, however, that the image of Islam in the West is less because of the errors of some Muslim rulers of the past and more as a direct consequence of systematic, deliberate false propaganda over the centuries of the Crusades. As a leading authority in the Islamic Studies, Dr. Edwin E. Calverly observed:

(The Crusades) "were conducted in the name of religion, but it must be remembered that all the

activities of medieval life were religious in their motivation and expression . . . to secure support for such political and military objectives the propaganda used religious motives. Nothing too harsh or too false could be said to excite hostility against the Muslims, both when the armies and the funds were collected and when the Crusades reached Western Asia. . .

The false information poured out for several centuries to all people of Europe who supplied the men and the means for the Crusades, and the false reports brought back by those who returned from the wars filled the West with popular misinformation about Islam that Western mass education has not yet been able to remove." (**New Eastern Culture and Society.** Princeton University Press, pp. 102-103.)

No wonder James A. Michener called Islam "the Misunderstood Religion." It will perhaps be charitable to assume that President Reagan has fallen victim to the same popular misinformation.

To portray the Middle East conflict in terms of a Muslim and a non-Muslim confrontation is another grievous error that President Reagan has committed. As Professor Haines points out, "this remark demonstrates a serious misunderstanding of the roles that all three religions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity, are playing." He notes that "there are about 800 million Muslims in the world today, 70% of whom do not live in the Middle East." (**Newsletter,** December, 1980)

We sincerely hope that President Reagan's remarks were made only because his unfortunate knowledge was based on the erroneous information provided to him. Nevertheless, as Professor Haines observes, such false statements are bound not only to "undercut his

relationship with Muslims everywhere, but particularly with those in the Middle East and with those several million who are citizens of the U.S.A." We fully concur with his comment that "understanding, impartiality and sensitivity will do more to foster friendly relationship, and hence, to further not only our national interests but also those of the Muslim nations, than will demeaning statements of any kind." It will be extremely tragic if President Reagan's remarks further reinforce the deepseated religious and ethnic bigotry that, according to Dr. Haines, "many Christians and Jews in the U.S.A. already feel toward Islam and the Muslim people."

Khalil A. Nasir

§

"That Muhammad really lived cannot be disputed. The development of Islam—at least when compared with the other world religions—is open to the clear light of history, and presents us with yet another proof that the Prophetic personality is the original source of the new religious creation. Truly: 'My Prayers and my worship and my life and my death are unto God, Lord of the worlds. He hath no associate. This am I commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims' (6:163, 164). The first of the Muslims! Muhammad is absolutely justified in so designating himself. He is the first representative of a new and independent religious type. Even today, after a period of development of thirteen centuries, one may clearly discern in genuine Islamic piety the uniqueness which is ultimately derived from its founder's personal experience of God."

(Tor Andrae in *Muhammad: The Man and His Faith.*)

What Is Sin?

by

Hazret Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad

(Being an excerpt from the English translation of a speech by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Second Successor to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, at the Annual International Conference on December 27 and 28, 1925. The lecture was delivered in Urdu. It was originally published under the title of **Minhaj-ut-Taalibin**. An English edition entitled **Ways of the Seekers** has been published by the Washington, D.C. center of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1982)

Sin is an activity which renders the human soul sick and incapable of viewing the face of God. Difficulties have to be encountered in the journey which the soul undertakes as it moves towards the purpose of its creation. Activities which amount to sinning are either physical whose dangers are visible to oneself as well as to others; or, they are spiritual. Of the physical activities many are such that the dangers and disabilities they entail are obvious.

What are good deeds? Good deeds are deeds which bring a person enough strength to join the onward march in the hereafter and which makes the soul capable of viewing the face of the Lord. Normally, a healthy person means one who is capable of going about life's activities in a normal way. One does not have to be extra-capable. One has to be just capable. Otherwise, small defects exist in everyone. Doctors cannot point to a single perfectly healthy body. A good man is one who has done enough good deeds both physical and spiritual to be capable of viewing the face of God.

Kinds of Virtues and Vices

We cannot give an adequate account of the different kinds of sin, unless we can also describe different kinds of virtue. So, let us remember, there are three kinds of virtues and correspondingly three different kinds of vices or sins. They are as follows:

1. Virtues and vices which pertain to the heart. These indeed are the real virtues or vices.
2. Virtues and vices of the tongue or expression.
3. Virtues and vices which entail the use of the other physical organs like hands, feet, eyes, etc., etc.

Where Does Sin Come From?

Here an important question arises. It may be asked with so many encouragements towards a life of virtue and so many discouragements towards a life of vice, and so much room for improvement, how does vice manage to enter the life of man?

I can only briefly indicate the answers to this important question. The main causes of sin are the following:

Firstly, ignorance. Sometimes a person allows himself no time for reflection while trying to satisfy his natural impulses and allows a passing interest or pleasure to determine his action. The excitement of the moment removes from his view the more permanent and the more solidly happy ends of life.

Why should this happen? Why are the more permanent ends of life ignored?

First, because of ignorance which may be permanent or passing. Permanent ignorance is a thing apart. Temporary ignorance is ignorance despite knowledge. This sort of ignorance can have many causes:

- a. Greed — too much greed blinds a person to many important matters;
- b. Pugnacity;
- c. Intense need;
- d. Bad health;
- e. Excessive fear;
- f. Excessive love;
- g. Excessive optimism;
- h. Excessive pessimism;
- i. Excessive insistence on anything;
- j. Excessive desire;
- k. Excessive lack of desire;
- l. Hereditary tendencies.

These are the twelve sources or circumstances which produce or promote ignorance.

Besides ignorance, the second big source of sin is social contacts and companions. Man is a born imitator. He tends to do as others do, without weighing and considering the consequences of what he is doing. These social influences include the influence of parents and other relations, playmates, teachers, social institutions and customs.

One source of sin and sinning we have said is ignorance. But ignorance can be just ignorance or it can be wrong knowledge which makes it different from sheer ignorance. Wrong knowledge is not often accepted as knowledge and spurious generalizations as authentic principles.

Another source of sinning is bad habits. Knowing very well what truth is and that merit attaches to telling the truth, when the crucial moment arrives a person tends not to tell the truth. An addict makes up his mind not to drink any more. He knows all about drinking and not drinking. But when the party sits down to drink he allows himself to join and cannot resist the temptation. At the slightest call his resolve not to drink is broken.

Sinning is also caused by habits of laziness and lack of organized hours of daily life. A person tends to take things easy. He is carefree. He has no inclination to work. When the time comes, he tends to make light of what he has to do. Time passes and he suddenly finds himself drinking. Once a sincere companion of the Holy Prophet — on him be peace and blessings — was all but ready to go to the battlefield but he made no preparation for it. He had persuaded himself that when the time came he would be able to join the party with ease. He continued to leave his preparations to the end. The result was he was left behind and could not join the army. Laziness, therefore, is often the cause of sin. Man is lazy and easy-going and is incapable of commanding himself to get up and go.

One source of sinning is lack of comparative judgment. Out of two alternative courses of action, a person cannot decide which is the better of the two. It also becomes a question for such people how different emotions are to be applied to different situations and is made by two parties, but how far does one go with one party and how far with the other? A man loves his wife but also his mother. Both have a similar title to love. This gives rise to difficult situations which are largely self-created. Similarly many people become convinced of the truth of the Promised Messiah but hesitate to join the fold. They say they owe allegiance to another saint whom they do not want to leave. These difficulties are due to an incapacity to judge.

Another source of sin is the many invisible influences which criss-cross one another in our lives. They exert a kind of hypnotic influence, unknown to the person affected. No argument is given nor is any appeal made, but the presence of influences which ideas generate is undeniable. This needs some explanation. Let a decent person live in close proximity to nine others not so decent, who nurse evil thought without any overt communication. He will soon begin to feel the evil influence. This reminds me of a Sikh student who had

great affection for the Promised Messiah. On one occasion he sent a message to him — through Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin Sahib — that his mind was being affected by agnostic thinking. The Promised Messiah suggested that this young man should change his seat in the classroom and sit away from his classmates who sat close to him. The change proved the cure for his agnosticism. No argument had passed between them, but unexpressed thoughts were being communicated in some mysterious way.

Thoughts are like waves and have a power of their own. The Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet — on him be peace and blessings — endorse this. Animal life also bears out this point. For example, two cats confront each other in an imminent fight. After an exchange of the usual mutual threats and noises, one of them is found to lower its tail and leave as if worsted. There is no visible fight; yet there was some kind of a contact.

Animals communicate without words or signs. Let four or five lions be brought together. Before long, only the strongest of them will be left standing as the master of the scene. Others will have lowered their tails and slipped away. If meat is thrown up at them, none will dare eat except the strongest; the rest will just stand by and watch as if paralysed with some secret fear.

Hypnosis: Under hypnosis too we can observe similar phenomena. I was once experimenting with hypnotic influences. I had some questions raised by agnostics which I wanted to answer experimentally. Our grandmother who was an amused spectator and was standing nearby, pooh-poohed the whole idea. She said: Here is a sparrow. Catch it if you can. I took her at her word. As I gazed into the eyes of the sparrow, I went close to him. He did not move. But when I proceeded to catch him, my hand intervened between his eyes and mine. This broke the spell and he flew out of my hand.

One traveller writes: I saw a squirrel running mad. Round and round he went gravitating to the same spot from which he had started. When I went near the spot I saw a snake protruding out his neck. The two were eventually very close to each other. The snake was about to make a morsel of him. I too went closer. The snake was still intent on eating him up. I hit the snake and scared it away. It is obvious, the squirrel was aware of the presence of the snake and wanted him to run away, before she did.

Another traveller writes: In an African jungle I saw a bird fluttering for life. I looked closer and saw a snake looking intently into the eyes of the bird. I killed the snake but later I found the bird too had died, possibly out of the fear of being caught.

In England they performed another kind of experiment. Two insects of the same species were placed apart at a distance of five miles from each other. In course of time, they both found each other. Something intangible must have exerted its pull to join them together.

An American biologist built an ant-house and sealed it carefully from the outside. After a while, whole colonies of ants were found sticking to the outside of a wall of the ant-house. On closer examination, it was discovered that the ants were sticking on the outside of the wall exactly on the spot where another colony of ants had collected inside. The experiment was repeated in another house, with the same result.

From these examples it is obvious that even at the animal level, waves of some kind shoot out which are more mental than physical. Their impact on intercommunication and mutual relations is undeniable. They do affect our modes of behavior. It is said that whenever the Holy Prophet — on him be peace — mixed with groups of people, he would invoke God's forgiveness and protection seventy times. Not that he

was afraid of physical contagion, though it is true Prophets love to be clean and that was one reason why he sought God's protection. But the other and the more important reason was that he cared for people who were clean in their own right but were likely to be affected by unclean thoughts and their evil influence.

Sin-Infected Conditions

To combat sin it is necessary to be able to identify sin-infected conditions. I would therefore give an account of such conditions so that their identification should become easy. Among them are the following:

1. A person looks upon sin with horror but now and then finds himself inclined towards it.
2. He still hates sin but is unable always to resist the temptation and falls for sin.
3. He does not hate sin but no more does he relish a life of sin. The result is that he commits a sinful action occasionally, without really liking or disliking sin.
4. He relishes sin but not without shame. If he sins, he sins in secret. If he refrains from sin, he does so because of past habit or because of social custom.
5. At this stage, he sinks much lower. Past habit and social custom cease to be adequate restraints. He is now ready to indulge in and enjoy a sinful life.
6. At this stage, he is not only sinful and evil, but also encourages others to be evil and sinful like him.
7. At this last and lowest stage, he becomes a profile of Satan, propagation of evil becomes his daily concern.

In comparison with sin-infected conditions we have the following good conditions which are listed below in an ascending order:

1. To do good for the sake of reward.
2. To choose good as a commandment of God.

3. To do good for the sake of good and to consider virtue to be its own reward.
4. To do good as a natural habit.
5. To enjoy doing good.
6. To propagate good in the world.
7. To become an embodiment of good and to treat its dissemination as one's single unalloyed aim in life like the angels. There are higher grades of goodness like prophethood; but they are a gift of God and cannot be attained by mere effort.

I have explained above that human actions may be good both morally and spiritually. When human actions pertain to other human beings, they are called moral. When they pertain to God, they are called spiritual. This means that from the practical point of view, they are subject to the same practices and rules, the same exercises and the same general principles. Moral and spiritual ailments, therefore, can be classed and treated together. I do not feel the necessity of elaborating this treatment any further. Others have already done this, including Sufis. So I would not like to add to whatever little I have said on the subject. The practical side of sin, however, remains important. This has to be studied in the light of the teachings of Islam.

Islamic treatment of sin is unique. It is part of its perfect teaching. Islam does not start treating sin after it has been committed. It turns more to prevention than cure. It raises the question: What can be done to prevent sin? There is no doubt that this is the rational approach, which contains the key to the treatment of sin. When a piece of cloth has become dirty, it needs more effort to clean it. It is best to see that we do not let it become dirty. This indeed is the main difference between Islamic and other teachings. Unlike other religions, Islam does not merely tell us what to do after a person has become sin-infected, it also tells us what is to be done when sin has not yet appeared and what may be done to prevent it appearing.

(To Be Continued.)

Predestination in Islam

by

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The idea of predestination or fatalism is as old as the human race itself. It will therefore be futile to trace the origin of this idea. Divination, palmistry, graphology and astrology give indirect support to the theory of predestination.

Predestination is the belief that everything follows a plan that has already been made so that human beings cannot change it. In ancient Greek and Roman mythology we come across the famous three goddesses of fate, namely Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, who respectively determined the birth, life-span and death of men.

The theory of predestination is so commonly interpreted among people of all races that the theory has a universal support and appeal.

The Akan word "NKRABEA" means "preordination" even though the people explain it to mean that man himself with the permission of Nyankopon (God) determines his fate or life-pattern just before his birth. That is to say if he chooses to be a drunkard in this world he informs God of his intention and his Lord blesses that for him. The pre-Islamic Arabs identified "time" as the universal destroyer of all things. They very much lamented about the fateful time which snatches men away and thus robs them of their useful and purposeful existence.

In Pauline Christianity, Predestination is the doctrine that God foreordains from eternity the salvation or

condemnation of certain souls (Romans 8:28-30). This doctrine has been the center of much theological controversy in Christianity. St. Augustine developed this Pauline doctrine and insisted that it does not violate man's free will. St. Thomas Aquinas while supporting St. Augustine's idea of predestination maintained that no reason can be given why souls are elected by God to go to heaven, while others are left reprobate to go to hell.

Loyola's Jesuit Order however, believed in free will and opposed predestination.

During the 16th century Protestant Reformation, John Calvin emphasized predestination and maintained that Christ's atonement is offered for the elect alone. In later Protestant theology, Calvin's ideas have been much softened for obvious reasons.

The obvious question is: "What does Islam teach about Predestination?" In Islamic Theology we come across the two words, **Taqdeer** and **Tadbeer**.

Taqdeer means Predetermination while **Tadbeer** means "Free Will." These two words are not found as such in the Holy Quran. Muslim theologians often used the word **qada** (Destiny) and **qadr** (Decree) to describe predestination in the Quran, but whether they are justified in doing so is another matter. So far as the theory of predestination in Islam is concerned, the early Muslim theologians were greatly influenced by the ideas of Christian theologians. The fact that the word "predestination" is not found in the Quran is another proof.

The words **qada** and **qadr** are used in the Quran to express the operation of Divine Decrees and Divine Pleasure. We read from the Quran thus: "He creates what He pleases. When He decrees a thing, He says to it 'Be' and it is;" (Al Imran 3:48) We also have the famous chapter called **Lailatul Qadr** which is variously translated as "The Night of Majesty."

The Night of Decree, "The Night of Dignity," and "The Night of Destiny." Destiny or Decree is never used in the Holy Quran to support the demoralizing idea that God, the Almighty has immutably decreed the happiness or misery of some men long before they are born. What eventually befalls man may depend largely on his environment.

One of the five cardinal principles of Islam is Prayer but if the theory of predestination is true then there is no need for man to pray for the attainment of any objective since prayer or no prayer what has been foreordained by God is bound to happen.

In fact Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, an eminent Islamic scholar, associated himself with what the fatalists think of prayer. The Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam strongly refuted Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's argument on the ineffectiveness of prayer on account of predestination in the strongest possible terms in his Urdu booklet, **Barakat al-Dua** (Blessings of Prayer).

The Promised Messiah (Peace be on him) wrote:

"This world we know is full of decrees. All things have their fixed properties. Fire, water, air, earth, cereals, plants, animals, metals and minerals of everyday use, all depend for their utility on these fixed properties. To make use of these properties we have to use the means appointed for them by God. To try and do without them would be foolish. The properties are part of the Natural Order. So are the physical or spiritual means appointed for them. To deny the utility of means is to deny the wisdom present in all nature.

What Syed is trying to say amounts to saying that there are means and ends everywhere. Only prayer is not a means to any end."

In fact, the Quranic meaning of **Qadr** (decree) is determining the measure of everything and to illustrate this meaning further, the following verses of the Holy Quran are relevant:

“And He (Allah) has taken unto Himself no son, and has no partner in the Kingdom, and He has created everything and has determined its proper measure.”
(25:31)

That is to say, there is a limit to the powers and functions or development of everything which God has created. These limitations point to one law that operates in the whole universe and hence to one Designer, Creator and Controller.

“Verily We have created everything in due measure.” (54:50)

That is, there is a determined measure for everything. It has an appointed time and place.

“And he who puts his trust in Allah — Allah becomes sufficient for him. Verily Allah’s purpose will be accomplished. Allah has appointed a measure for everything.” (65:4)

The meaning of the term “qadar” was misconstrued by some learned Muslim theologians to mean something else that is, Predestination, which they expounded to mean that man has been made the victim of a blind fate by God. If for instance, a man steals and he is caught and beaten to death, it is God who is to be blamed for it.

Nothing can be farther from the truth. The Quran repeatedly emphasizes the fact that God never punishes a people unjustly and that it is their own misdeeds that bring down punishment upon them. Punishment or reward is the result of the divine law of action and consequence. Thus we read:

"And if some good befalls them, they say 'This is from Allah' and if evil befalls them, they say, 'This is from thee.' Say 'All is from Allah.' What has happened to these people that they would not try to understand anything? Whatever of good comes to thee is from Allah; and whatever of evil befalls thee is from thyself." (4:49-80)

"And whatever misfortune befalls you is the consequence of what your own hands have wrought. And He forgives many of your sins." (42:31)

In fact, every misfortune that befalls a man is the result of the contravention by him of a particular law of nature so he himself is responsible for it.

In short, man is free to act as he chooses but must face the consequences thereof. "Every soul is pledged for what it has earned." (74:39) That is to say, every soul shall remain in pledge unless it will have paid for the sins it had committed, unless it will have been cleansed of sin after having suffered punishment for them.

The fourth Hadith of Al-Nawawi's collection namely, "A person may do the deeds of those who deserve paradise until he is only one cubit from it. Then what has been decreed for him overcomes him so that he may do the deeds of those who deserve Hell and enters it," is taken by some Muslims as the surest proof of predestination.

On careful study of this Hadith, we can say that the only sensible conclusion to arrive at is that God knows what the fate of each one of us is before we are born. This however does not mean that God is the cause of our misfortunes. We can only say that man's knowledge is limited and that he is not wholly independent. He is influenced by his environment, education and heredity

and so in order to judge rightly a particular action of his it is necessary to take into consideration all the conditions and circumstances which led to that particular action. It is therefore difficult for man to judge his fellow man. It is God the All-Knowing alone who can rightly judge man and since He is a just Judge there should be no fear on the part of anybody of any miscarriage of justice.

There are some Muslims who also see "Predestination" in the following verses even though that is not the case:

"We have indeed sent down manifest signs. And Allah guides whomsoever he pleases to the right path." (24:47)

"Surely, thou canst not guide whomsoever thou lovest; but Allah guides whomsoever He pleases; and He knows best those who would accept guidance." (28:57)

It is only the pessimist who will take these verses to be related to Predestination. Allah has made adequate provision for whoever wants to be guided. Allah does not force anybody to worship Him and that means that whoever voluntarily submits to the guidance of Allah, Allah in turn is pleased to guide him. Thus we read:

"Allah strengthens the believers with the word that is firmly established, both in the present life and in the Hereafter; and Allah lets the wrongdoers go astray. And Allah does what He wills." (14:28)

"There is no compulsion in religion. Surely, the right way has become distinct from error... Allah is the Friend of those who believe; He brings them out of all kinds of darkness into light." (2:257, 258)

"Proclaim: This is the truth from your Lord; then let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve." (18:30)

"He who follows the right way follows it only for the good of his own soul; and he who goes astray goes astray only to his own loss. And no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another." (17:16)

And, finally:

"Surely we have created man in the best make."
(95:5)

This verse means that man has been endowed by God with the best natural powers and qualities, by making use of which he can make infinite progress. That is to say, man can be a good architect and builder in both the physical and spiritual senses.

§

"The more one reflects on the history of Muhammad and of early Islam, the more one is amazed at the vastness of his achievement. Circumstances presented him with an opportunity such as few men have had, but the man was fully matched with the hour. Had it not been for his gifts as a seer, statesman, and administrator and, behind these, his trust in God and firm belief that God had sent him, a notable chapter in the history of mankind would have remained unwritten. It is my hope that this study of his life may contribute to a fresh appraisal and appreciation of one of the greatest of the sons of Adam."

(W. Montgomery Watt in *Muhammad at Medina.*)

An Unprecedented Migration

by

Mubarik A. Malik

Mass migrations seem to be on-going features of human history. Many factors, such as political, religious, social, or economic changes force multitudes of people to move from one country to another. Fear of living a painful life in their homeland or the hope of a better life in a foreign country urges many people to migrate. Sometimes this process and change demand an awesome price. At times it carries unforeseen miseries, loss of life and of property. The extent of human pain is usually in direct proportions to the number involved in a mass migration; the greater the number of uprooted families, the larger the scope of their agonizing experience. If the surrounding conditions happen to be unfavorable, pain, loss, and death increase unexpectedly.

The migration of the Ahmadiyya Community along with its Khalifa, Hazrat Fazl-i-Umar, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, was prophesized by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in 1885-86. He saw a dream that either he himself or one of his caliphs would migrate. He wrote:

“Once I saw a dream that someone is writing my name, half of it in Arabic and half in English. The prophets do migrate but some of the prophecies are fulfilled in his own time and some in the time of his progeny or through anyone of his followers.”

(Badar, Sept. 7, 1905, p. 2)

The name was being written half in Arabic and half in English was an indication that the migration will be at a time when for Muslims the British rule will end in India and a Muslim government, in the region in which the

Movement's center was located, will be formed. The Promised Messiah received some other revelations too in explanation of this dream that he has recorded in **BRAHEEN-i-AHMADIYYA**, p. 241.

In his book, **Dafiul Balaa**, p. 21, it is stated:

"Christians will make a scheme to harm us and God will also make a scheme and those days will be of trial. Say, O'God, give me protection in a pure land. This is a spiritual migration." . . . (Here the pure land stands for the literal meaning of the word, "Pakistan").

This prophecy of the Promised Messiah was fulfilled in the form of a massive migration in the history of mankind when Pakistan came into existence in 1947.

The year 1947 saw this huge migration in the history of mankind. It happened on the plains of Punjab, India. Millions of helpless human beings were uprooted. On August 14, 1947, the subcontinent of India won its freedom from British rule, but at the same time it was divided into two independent countries of Pakistan and India. This created a very complex situation. At that time India had a population of four hundred million, twice that of the United States. Here, several races, religions, and cultures had flourished for centuries. There were more than one hundred million Muslims living together with three hundred million Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and a dozen of other religious groups. India was divided into two separate independent countries on the principle that the areas where Muslims were in majority would constitute Pakistan, and the areas of Hindu majority would belong to India. Since the Muslims and Hindus were scattered all over when the political partition took place, a terrible situation arose that brought misery beyond imagination to millions of innocent people. The geographical areas that were given to Pakistan contained the majority of Muslims, nearly eighty million. Still a great number of Muslims, the remaining twenty million, had their homes in Bharat (India), the country with a Hindu majority, just as several million Hindus were left on the Pakistani side. Instead of

receiving protection, they were made targets of mob attacks. Their homes were put on fire, properties looted, and lives threatened. Almost all the principal cities of Punjab were in flames. In the villages, armed bands plundered, burned, massacred, and raped. Thousands of women were abducted, never to be seen again by their relatives. Most of the Muslims, under fear and compulsion, started to flee towards Pakistan. When the news of Muslim victimization reached Pakistan, a retaliatory mood arose among the Muslim masses against the Hindus and Sikhs living in Pakistan. As a result, millions of non-Muslims started to migrate towards Bharat. This set the stage for an appalling communal disorder and a two way migration; Muslims running away from Bharat and Hindus from Pakistan, crossing each other on the way.

“Ten and a half million people crossed the new boundary line that separated the two independent nations.”¹

On August 15, 1947, the day after the independence of India and Pakistan was declared, Hazrat Khalifatul Maskh II, the Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, delivered the Friday Sermon, and commenting upon this great revolution, said,

“We see cruelty and bloodshed along with the celebration of independence, particularly in those areas where we live. Punjab is the center of fierce fighting. Thousands of men are being killed each day. The number of people being killed in this small area is greater than the casualties of a big war. One brother is slicing the throat of another. Therefore, under the circumstances, our joy is mixed with grief. That mother cannot celebrate the happiness of an Eid, the body of whose only child lies at home.

Similarly, today the intelligentsia of India, though grateful to God, don't find their hearts to be fully happy. We are connected with both the new states that have come into existence. The religious communities cannot be a part of only one state. The members of our community lived in other countries too, but they were already living far away from each other. The brothers who are being separated from us today, lived together for a long time, and now we will visit each other as if we belong to foreign countries. At this time of independence and separation, we pray to Allah the exalted that He may bestow progress on both the countries and give them the ability to function in accordance with justice. The hearts of the people of both the countries may be filled with a spirit of love and compassion. May both the states endeavor to compete with each other in a friendly, sympathetic, and sincere way. They should compete as well as cooperate with each other. May God save them from every mischief and give them a chance to live in peace and harmony. He may create such circumstances that we may be able to spread the light of Islam."

(Alfazal, August 16, 1947)

Unfortunately no government was fully prepared to handle the situation. Lines of communication were hopelessly poor. Everything seemed to be falling apart. Millions of people were forced out at the roads, the railways, and the fields. By every form of transportation available, Hindus and Sikhs rushed out of Pakistan and Muslims out of India.

"From one end of the Punjab to the other, taking whatever possessions they could carry, by car, train, bicycle, bullock carts, and on foot, terrified people were fleeing their homes, rushing in headlong flight toward any promise of safety. They

would produce an exchange of populations, an outpouring of humanity on a scale and of an intensity never before recorded. By the time the movement reached flood tide in late September, five million human beings would clog the roads and fields of Punjab. Ten and a half million people, enough to form, if they join hands, a column of miserable human stretching from Calcutta to New York, would be uprooted, most of them in the brief span of three months. Their unprecedented exodus would create ten times the number of refugees the creation of Israel would produce in the Middle East, three or four times the number of displaced persons who had fled Eastern Europe after the war.”²

Refugee camps were set up in a hurry, but to reach the camp safely was a hazardous endeavor. The shadow of death and destruction hung over millions of homeless.

“All along the roads they were ambushed and butchered. Those who travelled by rail fared little better, for the trains were derailed and their occupants cut to pieces.”³

Scores of vicious bands of criminals continuously attacked defenseless men, women, and children, snatched away their remaining possessions, killed men and children, kidnapped and raped the women. No satisfactory arrangements were available for food and water. Hundreds of thousands died from starvation and thirst and were left unburied on the road sides. Dry dust and burning heat made it all the more difficult to finish the long journeys. It was not just an unsafe distance of a few miles; it was a hundred, sometimes two hundred miles they had to travel on foot. The refugee columns moved slowly, with their feet injured from thorns and stones, exhausted with hunger and thirst. The elderly and children suffered the most. Pregnant women gave birth to children during this miserable march. They had to carry the newly born without anything to nourish them. The crawling columns of depressed refugees were, at times, extremely long.

"One of them alone represented 800,000 people, the largest single column of refugees that man's turbulent history had ever produced."⁴

Captain R. E. Atkins spent a long time escorting refugee columns. At the start of their journey, they would be happy on their way to a new homeland. Then, weakened and tired from the burning sun, the thirst, the fatigue, and the endless journey, they would start throwing away their belongings. Practically at the end of their journey, they had almost nothing with them. Occasionally, a plane would appear in the sky to drop food. A panicked rush would follow, but armies had to protect that ration for fair distribution.

"Once, he was startled by the sight of a dog running away with a bread and a crowd following him, prepared to kill the dog and get the bread."⁵

The protection of those utterly confused columns was an overwhelming problem. There was every chance for them being attacked anywhere along their journey. Like always, the Sikhs' attacks were most severe. They would rise in groups from the sugar-cane and wheat fields to attack the weakest part of the caravan.

"Lt. G. D. Lal would never forget an old Muslim in a column moving towards Pakistan whose only possession was a goat. A few miles from the border of his new home, the goat jumped rapidly from a sudden overpowering fright toward a stand of sugar-cane. The old man followed with uncontrollable emotions. Suddenly, a Sikh appeared from the sugar-cane, killed the old man and ran off with his goat."⁶

At the time of partition, let me give you a very brief account of what was happening in and around Qadian, the Center of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

The first incident of disturbance in the surroundings of Qadian occurred on the night between 24th and 25th July, twenty five to thirty Sikhs stopped a train at Vadala Garanthian Station which was bound for Qadian and attacked it. The driver and six other persons were injured. The fireman with extreme cleverness drove away the train and thus succeeded in bringing it to Qadian.

(Alfazal, 20th July, 1947)

On August 12, the train communications ceased for Qadian and postal as well as telegraph services were cut off for all practical purposes.

On August 17, according to the notorious Radcliffe Award, Qadian was given to Bharat instead of Pakistan and thus Qadian became a part of tremendous trial from God.

The very next day on August 18, the Sikhs commenced their attacks on the Muslim villages of District Gurdaspur. Dreadful incidents of murder, slaughter, robbery, kidnapping, and arson were initiated which increased in intensity and scope day by day. In those days, the Sikhs started to block all the roads leading to Qadian and breaking the bridges on canals. As a result, the transportation to and from Qadian became extremely dangerous and risky.

On August 21, on the Western side of Qadian, an Ahmadi village Vanjwan was attacked by Sikhs which resulted in the death of 50 men, 39 were injured and the whole village was ransacked.

On August 23, a village on the north of Qadian, Faizullah Chak was attacked by thousands of armed

Sikhs in the presence of the police and army. Many Ahmadis and non-Ahmadi were killed. Several Muslim ladies were kidnapped and the entire village along with the adjacent village had to be vacated. Two thousand refugees arrived at Qadian for protection which itself was in a critical situation.

Under these circumstances Hazrat Umul Momineen along with several other ladies of Promised Messiah's family were sent to Lahore on August 25, 1947. Incidentally, I would like to say that the late Hazrat Syedah Mansoora Begum Sahiba insisted to stay in Qadian as long as her husband, the present Khalifa Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, was staying on duty as an administrator, in Qadian.

On Friday, August 29, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II, made his last sermon at Qadian in which he gave the following important directions:

- (1) Under any circumstances, a believer should always hold fast the attributes of justice, humility, love, kindness and mercy and should not impure the heart with vengeance and anger. A noble example can win over bitter enemies. We should always protect each and every Hindu and Sikh woman and child, like our own sister and own child.
- (2) After resisting trespass to an extent, Islam permits to stop injustice. No government in the world can prove the right of self-defense and self-protection as unjustified. In repressing the wrong doings of others, a believer overcomes ten or sometime 60 or 70 opponents. Therefore, facing inequity, you should react courageously. To run away in danger is to invite death.
- (3) Qadian is crowded with refugees, therefore, all the necessary commodities like wheat, wood, and fuel should be consumed as little as possible.

- (4) The Jamaat should keep on praying under all circumstances. The servants of Allah do not cease praying in what ever Allah the Exalted decrees upon them.

(Alfazal, Sept. 1, 1947)

To summarize the situation in Qadian, I would like to give a quotation from the daily Dawn, Karachi. It wrote:

Qadian, the headquarters of Ahmadiyya Movement, is surrounded by a hostile mob of Sikhs during the last few days. All communications have been cut off from the outside world. There is a fear of attack at any moment. About 2,000 Muslims from the neighboring villages have taken refuge in Qadian. In view of the grave situation it is now proposed to shift women and children to a safer place, says a telegram received by Dr. Ahmad, acting Amir of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat, Karachi, from the Head of the Ahmadiyya community in Qadian. Dr. Ahmad, in an interview, said that the members of his community in Karachi and elsewhere were gravely perturbed and grave anxiety prevails about the safety of their Head and the community in Qadian. Several young members of the community have decided to leave for Qadian immediately, disregarding all dangers.

It is a miracle of miracles that in spite of all unfavorable circumstances, the Ahmadiyya community as a whole came out of danger and reached Pakistan with the least amount of loss of life and honor. The whole process of evacuation and migration was very ably handled by extremely sincere and hard working administration under the direction of Khalifatul Masih II. His son and our present Head, Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, played a very crucial role in the safety of Ahmadis while migrating from Qadian. In a jungle of disorderliness, chaos, and death, the Ahmadiyya

community, by the grace of Allah, was safe and well-protected. It reached the destination in Pakistan. Khalifatul Masih II himself came to Pakistan and arrived at the end of August, 1947. It is a blessing of Allah that Qadian was never fully vacated by Ahmadis; 313 volunteers held the fort and they are known as "DARWESHAN-e-QADIAN." Their names will be written in gold in the history of Ahmadiyyat. The Ahmadiyya community as a whole survived this tremendous trial while many others were shattered and went through the miseries.

What were the reasons for this human misery on such an extensive scale? The factors that caused this disorder and aggravated the plight of the people were manifold. The main causes were:

Firstly, the history of the Punjab itself;

Secondly, police and army were completely incapable of maintaining peace; and

Thirdly, the governments of Bharat and Pakistan were totally disorganized.

In Punjab, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs were ruled by the British prior to the declaration of independence. The British had taken power in the Punjab from the Sikhs who were, for sometime, the independent rulers of Punjab. Sikhs had suffered great oppression at the hands of the Muslim Mughal Kings of India. The Sikhs were since then, vengeful towards Muslims. When the British decided to quit India and Muslims were again ready to take over power in Pakistan, the Sikhs along with the Hindus were not willing to accept this new political development. They decided to oppose the existence of Pakistan. They could not succeed in their opposition on the political grounds and secretly prepared themselves

for communal riots and were ready for civil war. On the eve of independence, the Muslim masses were caught unaware due to the readiness of Sikhs and Hindus to attack them. Being defenseless, the Muslims suffered the most. The police and army of both the countries had internal problems and were unable to handle this extraordinary emergency. The Punjab Boundary Force contained both Muslim and non-Muslim troops. The troops refused to fire on members of their own communities and became useless in maintaining law and order. It was soon banned leaving the armies of Bharat and Pakistan each responsible for its own area. Above all, both the newly born governments were utterly disorganized. The transfer of civil officers and police was done hectically and nothing but confusion reigned all over. No one could stop the flow of refugees and their blood bath.

The fact of the matter is that no one was ready for the partition of British India. The majority of people believed that the dream of an independent Muslim state within the sub-continent would never be realized. The concept of Pakistan was born only seven years before its creation. It remained an uncertainty until Jun 3, 1947, only ten weeks prior to its becoming a reality. Therefore, there was no planning, no control, and no adequate machinery to carry out the huge task of smooth migration.

As both governments could not stop the flood of refugees, they decided to expedite the complete evacuation of Muslims from Bharat and of non-Muslims from Pakistan.

"A total number of 6,500,000 refugees came into Pakistan, while 500,000 Muslims lost their lives or never reached their destination. On the other hand, it is estimated that about 5,500,000 Hindus and Sikhs left Pakistan."⁷

With this incredibly large number of refugees, it may properly be called an unprecedented migration in the history.

This upheaval proves that human beings can sink into the lowest ebb of morality if emotions are let loose, Fear, greed, selfishness, revenge, and hatred can make a man worse than an animal. His behavior may become that of a beast of jungle.

All this could have been avoided if the people of Punjab, in particular, and sub-continent India in general, would have heard the words of the Promised Messiah who brought the message of peace for them. He warned them giving the words of God and said,

“God sent a warner to the world, but it did not accept him; God will accept him and prove his truth with forceful attacks.”

The Promised Messiah has repeatedly warned the entire world to listen to him and to submit to God. We pray and hope that the entire world may pay heed to his call and save itself from future wrath of God and complete annihilation. Amen.

END NOTES

1. Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre; **Freedom at Midnight**, (New York: Avon Books, 1976, p. 397.)
2. Ibid, p. 340.
3. Richard Symonds, **The Making of Pakistan**, (London: Fabre and Fabre Ltd., 1950, p. 83.)

4. Collins and Lapierre, p. 369.
5. Ibid, p. 373.
6. Ibid, p. 374.
7. Richard Symonds, p. 83.

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Abu Musa Ash'ari relates that the Holy Prophet said: The case of a righteous companion and that of an evil companion is like that of one who carries perfume and of one who blows into a furnace. The carrier of perfume might give you some as a gift, or you might buy some from him, or at least you might smell its fragrance. As for the other, he might set your clothes on fire, and at the very least you will breathe the foul air issuing from the furnace (*Bokhari and Muslim*).

The Fast of Ramadan

by

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During (the month of Ramadan, ed.) those of Islamic faith devote the daylight hours to complete abstention from all eating and drinking. Because the Muslim months begin with the appearance of each new moon, the time for the observance of Ramadan changes from year to year. At each annual cycle the first day of the month occurs eleven days earlier than it did the previous year. It takes thirty-three years for the month of Ramadan to pass through the complete cycle of seasons.

. . . During the time of fasting daily work should continue as usual, although the community is tolerant toward those who give in to lassitude during the month. Each believer should perform supplementary prayers during Ramadan and take part in special ceremonies at the mosque. In a Muslim country the authorities provide public signals of various kinds to mark the beginning and the end of the fast each day. People are aroused early enough each morning, if they so desire, to eat a meal just before the break of day. At sunset food is taken almost immediately, either just before or just after the sunset prayer. Each region of the Muslim world has particular items of food that are habitually taken to break the fast. Then, later, a more copious repast is served. Often the nights of Ramadan are spent in social visiting and entertainment, as well as in exercises of religious devotion.

The fast was instituted in the second year of the Muslim era. It is considered a duty, the performance of which is pleasing to God. It has both a negative side — total abstinence from food and drink — and a moral side — the refraining from forbidden words and deeds. The Prophet Muhammad said, "If you do not give up lying there is no need for you to give up eating and drinking." The fast is not considered valid if the person observing it entertains thoughts of envy or hatred.

The idea of ascetic denial of the pleasure of the flesh is absent from Muslim fasting. Emphasis is put upon the discipline of character that it encourages. It is said that fasting educates the will and the conscience by refusing them their habitual and selfish requirements. Ramadan puts the rich and poor on the same level, at least temporarily, so it should cause the rich to feel compassionate toward the poor. Physically, it is believed that fasting strengthens the digestive system and contributes to recovery from several diseases.

Children begin to fast seriously at about the age of thirteen, although they may participate in the practice earlier, to a partial degree. Elderly people and those seriously ill are exempt from fasting. Others are also exempt, due to their temporary circumstances, but they are expected to make up later in the year the time that they did not fast during Ramadan. These are the sick, women in their menstrual period or in childbirth, pregnant women and nursing mothers, travelers under difficult conditions and soldiers in battle.

The foregoing is information to help one understand how the month of Ramadan is observed in Islam. But, having learned these facts, one is still far from grasping the meaning of this practice for Muslim devotion. In order to come to a deep and sympathetic understanding of the fast, we need to be sensitive to the varied aspects of

religious feeling in Islam. Some Muslims affirm that they never feel better, physically and mentally, than during the month of Ramadan. Others emphasize that it helps a believer to concentrate on the unremitting struggle against the baser tendencies of human nature. For some it symbolizes the willingness of Muslims to surrender to the will of God. Again, it is interpreted as one of the means whereby a Muslim communes with God and enters into the deep meaning of the divine message to humankind.

The fast is also a commemorative act, a manner of rendering praise to God for two great historical events which are believed to have taken place during the month of Ramadan. The first of these is the beginning of the revelations that were granted to the Prophet Muhammad, the record of which is contained in the Quran. The second event commemorated is the military victory at Badr, the first great trial of the new community of believers that had been formed in Medina under the leadership of Muhammad.

Muslims believe that fasting during Ramadan will insure the pardon of their sins from one year to the next, provided of course, that the act of privation is done for God alone. In general Islam has not taught the idea of penitence or of the atonement for sin by suffering or privation, so one is not authorized to conclude, from the idea that fasting takes away sins, that Islam is a religion teaching salvation by pious deeds. Such an erroneous conclusion comes from judging Islam according to the terms of a whole Christian doctrinal ethos and historical milieu. This kind of judgment only distorts the image of Islam. In that religion, good works, such as prayer, fasting and alms-giving, when performed with humility, meet the approval of God and gain merit for those who do them, but ultimately, salvation comes only from God's power and mercy. The Prophet Muhammad said, "He who on emerging from his house supplicates: I issue forth in

the name of Allah, putting my trust in Him; there is no strength to resist evil and no power to do good save through Him; is greeted with: He is guided, is sufficed and is saved, and Satan withdraws from him." (Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, tr. **Gardens of the Righteous**, p. 25).

Apart from all of the foregoing interpretations and motivations of fasting, most Muslims are content with the certainty that because God has ordained the fast, they must observe it. The spirit of true devotion seeks no other reason for the act, no other motivation. Ramadan provides a concrete and easily grasped means for maintaining a satisfactory relationship with the Creator.

Finally, the fast of Ramadan is a remarkable social phenomenon. Not only is it a forceful witness to faith by the entire community, but, providing for a striking break in the ordinary run of life, it constitutes a refreshing and uplifting interlude for the multitudes, a time of diversion which is sanctioned by a severe discipline.

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§

Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: A man set out to visit a brother in another town. Allah appointed an angel to safeguard him on his way. When the man approached the angel he was asked: Whither are you bent? He answered: I intend to visit a brother of mine in yonder town. The angel asked: Have you committed some valuable to him which you desire to take care of? The man answered: No. I have no desire except to visit him because I love him for the sake of Allah. the angel said to him: I am a messenger of Allah sent to you to tell you that Allah loves you as you love your brother for His sake (*Muslim*).

Islam and Peace: A Testimony

by

Mohamed Aziz Lahbabi

Islam is a comprehensive manner of behaving and thinking with reference to others in the world, under the all-seeing eye of God, who is, as the Quran says, "with you wherever you might be" (Surat al-Hadid, 57:4). To live as a Muslim means to be aware of oneself as physically and conscientiously involved in the world and directed toward personal authenticity.

As physically and conscientiously involved, the Muslim is responsible for changing himself and for changing the world for the better. May Quranic verses teach us that God created man and made of him His "ally" in the world, His "lieutenant."

Peace is the protection of the universe and of all that it contains. The charge to protect is an "amanah," that is, a mission given by God to Humankind, His lieutenant. Since war is abolition and destructive hatred, it follows that the person who makes war, who supports it or approves of it, betrays the mission that God has given him. To participate in a war amounts to setting oneself up as an enemy of the God who created the world and its beings. War thus presents itself as a radical opposition to God and an absolute and unambiguous contradiction between Him and his unworthy lieutenants. For the true Muslim there is a choice: either join the camp of peace in order to be on God's side, or else betray oneself.

A hadith defines the Muslim thus: "the person who leaves others in peace, who does no wrong to anyone, either by the tongue or by the hand," no slander or injury, no fighting, no violent act or any such thing that the hand might commit, that is, by physical force. To be worthy of the divine lieutenancy, there must be purity in intention and purity in deed . . .

Some people like to translate "jihad" by "holy war." That translation is an aberration.

How can we conceive of "holiness" in the war of a religion that has introduced into inter-personal relations the concept of salam, in its double meaning, salvation and peace? The word "jihad" comes from "juhd," meaning effort, either physical or moral. One evening when they had returned from a victory over their idolatrous adversaries, the Muslims manifested a certain satisfaction. Muhammad exclaimed to them: "We have returned from the minor "jihad" in order to undertake the true "jihad," that of the soul."

Evil is also present in each one of us and each one is called to combat it. The struggle to control our evil tendencies is a discipline preliminary to any struggle begun in favor of truth and right. The one who has not succeeded in establishing peace in his own heart, who has not interiorized the ideal for which "jihad" is conducted, that one cannot assume any valid task with purity and success, no matter what it is.

"Jihad" is, then, a progressive effort, a movement toward the inner and outer betterment of every person. It is the opposite of war which destroys people, their accomplishments and the world. "Jihad" is, first of all, self-knowledge and then the conquest of self; thus it is a combat against animality and the blind forces of nature. To defend peace comes then to mean conducting "jihad" against those who endanger the human acquisitions of history, be they material acquisitions or moral ones.

Consequently all are involved in "jihad" who declare war against poverty, against the exploitation of certain groups by others, against the pride of prestige, against chauvinism... In such a program the role of the Muslim community has been made clear by the Quran: to witness, to serve as "witness toward the people" (Surat al-Baqara, 2:143). Muslims cannot carry out their role of witnesses

without a preliminary involvement in the promotion of human society . . .

Faith, "iman," is defined as "the intimate union of affirmation and deed." It is by the deed that faith is carried into effect . . . The only true Islam is the Islam of the heart, interiorized, become the fullness of our being, the strength of communication with God and with his creatures by good deeds. Those acts which separate us from our fellows at the same time separate us from God, and those which bring us near to them also bring us near to the Lord.

Here are potentials of spiritual energy which should be exploited for the sake of universal concord, in the "jihad" against war, against wars. To defend the peace is to plead for humankind, the masterpiece of God's creation. However, humankind cannot prosper unless freed from fear, protected against war, exploitation, iniquity and tyranny of every kind. Mankind becomes human and fulfilled in a world at peace, the world which embraces human life . . .

We have tried to mark out the main lines of an Islamic concept of peace. It seems that essentially the same elements underlie both the Christian concept and the ideal of the international organizations.

So, all people of good will sense the requirements of a common action to transform our broken world together. Such a grand and universal aspiration necessitates a primordial dimension, that of transcendence. Without transcendence neither geographical and historial ties, nor race, nor patriotism can overcome the obstacles.

(From the **Bulletin of the Secretariat for Non-Christian Religions** at the Vatican, 1976, X1/2, No. 32, reproduced by Newsletter of the **Task Force on Christian Muslim Relations**, Hartford, CT.)

*Current Topics:***The Muslim Republics
in the Soviet Union**

Many Western commentators saw the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 as the continuation of a historic Russian policy, dating from long before the Bolshevik Revolution, of expanding southward toward the "warm water" of the Indian ocean.

That Russia has expanded southward over the centuries is, indeed, incontestable. It was one of the European colonial powers that conquered most of Asia in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The limits of its southward expansion were drawn neither by self-restraint on its part nor by any clear ethnic or geographical divide. Rather they were drawn essentially by the influence of its imperial rival, Great Britain, which shored up the nominal authority of three weak Islamic states — Ottoman Turkey, Qajar Persia, and the turbulent Afghan kingdom — as buffer states between the Russian and British empires.

Today the British empire has vanished, along with the empires of France, Spain, the Netherlands, and Portugal. Even the much newer and more informal United States empire has contracted spectacularly. Everywhere the formerly colonized peoples have revolted — sometimes peacefully, sometimes with violence — and asserted their independence. Everywhere except in the Russian empire.

If the Russian empire has really resumed its southward march, that is surely an anachronism. What should have happened is the reverse. The peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus, colonized by Russia in the 19th century, might have been expected to revolt and assert their independence.

They have not done so. But are these historically Muslim people likely to be affected by the wave of "anti-imperialist" revivalism that has lately shaken so many Muslim countries? Can Soviet power be challenged by a resurgence of Islam?

These questions have intrigued me since the fall of 1978. At that time, when the Islamic revolution in Tehran was already in full cry, an article appeared in the British review, Religion in Communist Lands, entitled "Muslim Religious Conservatism and Dissent in the USSR."

Written by two French specialists in the subject, Alexandre Bennigsen and Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay, the article began by drawing attention to the fact that the USSR, with an estimated 45 to 50 million Muslim inhabitants, is "the fifth Muslim power in the world (behind Indonesia, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh)" and went on to make the astounding claim that, owing to a demographic explosion, "by the turn of this century there will be at least 100 million Muslims in the Soviet Union (as against some 150 million Russians.)"

The authors went on to assert the existence of widespread clandestine religious organizations in the Soviet Muslim lands, in the form of Sufi (mystical) brotherhoods, which they described as "a dangerous foe for the Soviet establishment" and "the only underground organization in the Soviet Union which has not only managed to survive all persecution, but also to acquire a new vigor during the last 10 years."

At a New York conference on Soviet Muslims. . . experts confirmed that the demographic problem is real, although they suggested it is less dramatic than Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay theorized in their 1978 article.

The projected figure for the Soviet Muslim population in the year 2000 is not "at least 100 million" but "over 60 million," which would be 1 of every 4 or 5 Soviet citizens.

But the difference between the birthrates for Muslims and non-Muslims is so marked that, if present trends were to continue, every second Soviet child born in the year 2000 would be a "Muslim." And the Soviet authorities are getting worried about it. At their Communist Party congress last February the need for an "effective demographic policy" was for the first discussed at some length, and it was specified that fertility studies should be undertaken on a regional basis.

The most immediate aspect of the problem is manpower. Taken as a whole, the rate of increase in the Soviet population of working age is slowing down quite abruptly: In the 1980s it will be only a quarter of what it was in the 1970s, and the net increase will come entirely from the "southern tier" — that is, the predominantly Muslim part of the country. In the rest of the country there will be a net decrease — unless, of course, there is a massive migration of Muslim workers from south to north.

Most specialists, whether Western or Soviet, do not expect that to happen. If it did, one can well imagine, on the basis of European experience, that the effect would be to exacerbate racial tensions within the Soviet Union rather than to soften them.

What is already noticeable, by contrast, is a tendency of the Russian settlers to leave predominantly Muslim areas and return northward.

If that trend continues, the effect will inevitably be to accentuate the "Muslim" character of the southern Soviet republics. For that reason alone, the Soviet authorities are unlikely to encourage it on a large scale. It seems, on the contrary, that they favor an increased concentration of industrial investment in the southern tier, and that, too, raises awkward political questions: How will the rest of the country react to an apparent discrimination in favor of the south, and what will be the social consequences in the south of an increased rate of urbanization?

. . . What makes this problem so awkward is the persistence among the Muslims of a strong sense of their separate identity. In the words of French writer Helene Carrere d'Encausse, they remain obstinately *Homo Islamicus* as opposed to the officially promoted, albeit mythical *Homo Sovieticus*.

. . . There was, indeed, some discussion at the conference as to whether the people in question think of themselves primarily as "Muslims" at all. Some stressed that 80 percent of them speak closely related Turkic languages and suggested they should be considered Turks, not Muslims.

Others said that the different nationalities fostered by the Soviet state — Uzbek, Kazakh, Turkmen, Azeri, etc. — were not just the products of a cynical divide-and-rule policy but corresponded to longstanding and genuine ethnic identities.

The conclusion of this debate was that different identities take on greater importance in different contexts, but that all the identities mentioned served to differentiate the people concerned from Slavic Russians. In any "us vs. them" discussion, the Russians were always "them."

. . . Much evidence was also adduced of a growing self-confidence among the Muslim elites — whether that of the "official" religious leadership, which patronizingly portrays communism as a kind of by-product of Islam, or that of local communist leaders who present themselves less and less as representative of the Soviet Communist Party in the provinces (a role left increasingly to the second secretary of each regional party, who is always a Russian) and more and more as representatives of their own nationalities bargaining with Moscow for more power, more perquisites, and more exclusive control of their own affairs. The feeling is that, as the demographic balance swings against the Russians, these Islamo-communists will bargain increasingly from a position of strength.

(Edward Mortimer, Senior Associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in the **Christian Science Monitor**, June 12, 1981.)

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